

whether the vendor is the same or not with the vendor of the products that are used by the user,

a using status information receiving means receiving the using status information, also comprising a number of times a particular software product is used by the user,

wherein, the vendor terminal apparatus can use the user registration information from a user of a product of a different vendor rather than the vendor itself.

15. (SEVEN TIMES AMENDED) A computer-readable storage medium encoded with software to cause a computer to perform the actions of:

obtaining, from an external unit, user registration information including a requested information type, and using status information including a product used by a user, transmitted from the user of a computer-related product;

notifying an external unit of new information about the computer-related product, if the new information about the computer-related product corresponds to the requested information type, the new information including additional products available from a plurality of vendors that can be used with the product used by the user, and said requested information type further signifies a difference in vendor of said products that can be used in combination with products that are used by the user, in terms of whether the vendor is the same or not with the vendor of the products that are used by the user; and

receiving the using status information, comprising a number of times a particular software product is used by the user,

wherein, the computer-readable storage medium is used by a computer that can use the user registration information from a user of a product of a different vendor rather than the vendor itself.

REMARKS

Claims 14 and 15 are amended.

If the Examiner has any remaining informalities to be addressed, it is believed that prosecution can be expedited by the Examiner contacting the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview to discuss resolution of such informalities.